**Summary of H.R. 1674,**
**the U.S. Tsunami Warning and Education Act**

**Overview**

The bill authorizes and strengthens tsunami research, detection, warning and mitigation programs of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). It provides $30 million a year for three years to improve our capabilities in each of those areas. The bill is based on the Administration's January 14, 2005 tsunami warning system proposal, and incorporates the views of witnesses from a Science Committee hearing held on January 26, 2005 and other experts.

The bill authorizes type of activities: expanding and upgrading NOAA's detection and warning system; creating a federal-state tsunami hazard mitigation program with emphasis on education and outreach; and creating a tsunami research program. Also, the bill directs NOAA to provide technical assistance and training on the development of a global tsunami detection and warning network, especially in the Indian Ocean Region.

**Highlights of the Bill**

Expands tsunami forecast and warning capability for all U.S. coastlines (not just the Pacific). The bill provides flexibility for NOAA to determine the proper mix of tsunami detection equipment (buoys, tidal gauges, etc.), but requires that the components be integrated with other ocean observing systems. These activities are funded at $21 million per year.

Increases emphasis on tsunami education and outreach activities. Experts at the Science Committee hearing testified that education and outreach activities are important to saving lives. The bill creates a federal-state partnership program to improve community awareness and preparedness for tsunamis. States would help decide what activities would be funded, such as inundation maps, evacuation plans and warning sirens. These activities are funded at $6 million per year.

Requires NOAA to have a dedicated tsunami research program. The program will improve capabilities to detect, forecast, and mitigate for tsunami threats with specific research on new buoys, modeling and mapping. This is funded at $3 million per year.

Calls on the National Academy of Sciences to review NOAA's tsunami programs. The goal is to have outside experts evaluate NOAA's efforts and provide recommendations to improve the programs.

Requires NOAA to notify Congress if any part of the detection or warning system malfunctions (after three months). At the time of the December 26, 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, three of the six NOAA special detection buoys in the Pacific Ocean were not working; one had been broken for 15 months.

Directs NOAA to provide technical advice and training to the international community. As we work toward the goal of a global tsunami detection and warning system, NOAA will provide guidance on detection equipment, identifying and mapping vulnerable coastal areas and developing communication technologies to provide quick and reliable warnings to vulnerable communities.